Foreign countries Interested in Trade with Gujarat

*75. SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that foreign countries have shown interest in certain items manfactured in Gujarat;

(b) if so, the details of the foreign countries and the names of items;

(c) whether any foreign country has placed any order for the purchase; and

(d) if so, the value of the purchase order by each country and the total foreign exchange likely to be earned by this export?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (d). The Ministry of Commerce, Government of India do not monitor enquiries received by individual exporters in the country. The State-wise data regarding exports is also not maintained by the Ministry of Commerce.

***Lifting of price and distribution control* on coal**

*76. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: SHRI VIREN J. SHAH:

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to lift price and distribution control on coal clearing the way for its free import;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard;

(c) whether Government propose to throw open the coal industry to foreign private capital on the lines of power sector;

(d) if so, what are the details in this regard;

(e) whether import duty on coking coal is going to be reduced to 5 per cent and 35 per cent non coking coal;

(f) what is the present import duty rates on various categories of coal; and

(g) what are the details of import of coal by Government controlled bodies and private sector during the last three years, from different countries and at what rates?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) and (b). Bureau of Industrial Costs and prices, who have taken up a study of coal industry, in their interim policy recommendations have recommended decontrol of prices of coking coal and some grades of non-coking coal. The argument in favour of the proposal is that the decontrol will help the coal companies to fix their price in line with the market conditions and also improve the performance of some of the loss making companies.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. Coal Mines (Natinalisation) Act, 1973 has been amended w.e.f. 09.06.1993 to allow private sector participation in coal mining only for captive purposes for generation of power, and for other end uses to be notified in addition to existing provision for iron and steel. These private sector parties could be Indian or Foreign.

(e) and (f) Information about the likely reduction in import duties on coal is not available in the Ministry.

The existing rates of import duties are as under:

(i) For import of all coals: 85%

Reduced customs duty on following conditions.

(ii) Cooking Coal of ash content below 12% 5%